Post 1-31-69

Packard Put In Charge of Pueblo Affair

Deputy Defense Secretary David Packard will oversee all matters relating to the seizure of the USS Pueblo "to see that incidents like this cannot happen again."

The announcement was made yesterday by Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird here as the Naval Court of Inquiry at Coronado, Calif., was in closed session, hearing Lt. Stephen R. Harris, who headed the intelligence unit aboard the spy ship.

Laird told a newsman at his press conference he hoped no one would infer that the Navy might be doing anything wrong.

Laird said Packard would probe "the kind of protection given these ships, to see that incidents like this cannot happen again, to see that we are in a position where the rights of all individuals are protected at all times, and to see that they are and have been in this case."